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ARMED CAREER CRIMINAL SENTENCED TO 210 MONTHS IN FEDERAL PRISON

(AUSTIN, TEXAS) This morning, United States District Judge Sam Sparks sentenced 26-year-old **DAVID JAMES STEWART** of Texas City, Texas, to 210 months in federal prison, without the possibility of parole, for being unlawfully in possession of a firearm as a convicted felon. Because of Stewart's prior convictions for violent felonies and a serious drug offense, Stewart was considered an armed career criminal, subjecting him to an enhanced sentence.

In April 2002, Stewart was arrested at a residence in Smithville, Texas. Officers found Stewart in possession of three firearms, ammunition, and a small quantity of illegal drugs. Stewart has prior convictions for burglary, robbery, and drug trafficking crimes. On December 3, 2002, Stewart pled guilty to one count of Felon in Possession of a Firearm.

"This case is an excellent example of local and federal authorities working together to take a habitual, gun-toting criminal off the streets and put him behind bars for a long time, making our district a safer place," stated United States Attorney Johnny Sutton

This case was investigated by the Smithville Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. Assistant United States Attorney Matthew Devlin prosecuted this case on behalf of the Government. The successful prosecution of this case is another example of how the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Texas is implementing the Department of Justice's new gun crime initiative - Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN).

Modeled after the success of Project Texas Exile, Project Safe Neighborhoods is a nationwide federal initiative designed to reduce gun violence in our communities. PSN promotes partnerships among federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to target violent criminals who use guns and insures that when an armed criminal is arrested, that individual will face swift criminal prosecution and be exiled from the community through the use of stiff mandatory prison sentences. This commitment to reduce gun crime includes federal funding this year of \$233.6 million, which is used to hire new federal and state prosecutors, support investigators, provide training, and develop and promote community outreach efforts.

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